TOWN OF BOLTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
Monday, November 02, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.
Notch Road Municipal Center (Room A) & Zoom Meeting
MEETING MINUTES

	ROSTER	IN-PERSON	ZOOM	ABSENT
FIRST SELECTMAN:	Rodney Fournier	X		
SELECTMEN:	Bryce Aaronson	X		
	Mather Clarke	X		
	David Cowles	X		
	Robert DePietro	X		
	Gwen Marrion	X		
	Tim Sadler	X		

STAFF:	James Rupert, Town Administrator
	Stephanie Smigala, Interim Finance Director
	David Caruso, Bolton Superintendent of Schools
	Andrea Vassallo, Recording Secretary

1.0 Call to Order:
First Selectman Rodney Fournier called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2.0 Pledge of Allegiance:
The BOS stated the Pledge of Allegiance.

3.0 Public Comment:
Jim Loersch – Brookfield Road, Bolton

- Asked the Town to make more information available on the town website about major projects, including the school roof, Town Green, soccer field, and sewer project. He requested details on each project's scope, status, schedule, and how those decisions are made.
- There is a large basement under the old town hall that is empty and suggested it should be utilized to store items associated with the Registrar of Voters effectively moving them out of the rental trailers at the Center School to reduce costs.

Consensus among the BOS to move Agenda Item 7.0: Consider and Act on A/P to Agenda Item 3a. MOTION CARRIED.

Consensus among the BOS to move Agenda Item 8.0: Consider and Act on Budget Transfers to Agenda Item 3b. MOTION CARRIED.

3.a. Consider and Act on A/P:
Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to APPROVE** the FY 26-27 accounts payable in the amount of $143,683.12. Selectman M. Clarke **SECONDED;**

Discussion:
B. Aaronson, Page 2, Bolton Lake House Apartments.

- Inquired about the standard application process.
- Town Administrator James Rupert stated that the application process is private, applicants must demonstrate the need based on socioeconomics and administered by staff at the Senior Center.

B. Aaronson, Windsor Corporation, Restock of Hardware

- Found the descriptor 'restock of hardware' generic and inquired about the actual activity being performed and/or service provided.
- Town Administrator J. Rupert stated he understood the restocking activity as resupplying fasteners, nuts and bolts to both the Building & Grounds, and Highway Departments.
- Interim Finance Director, Stephanie Smigala stated that the invoice provided by Windsor Corporation does provide an itemized list.

D. Cowles, Page 8, Employee Alcohol Testing

- Inquired about employee alcohol testing.
- Town Administrator J. Rupert stated that alcohol testing is required by the insurance company and to be conducted at random intervals.

MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Clarke, Cowles, DePietro, Marrion, Sadler
Nay	0
Abstain	0

3.b. Consider and Act on Budget Transfers:
Selectman B. Aaronson **MOVED to TABLE** the requests in the amount of $650 for direct fees for office supplies and $10,711.25 from the Budget of the Assessor to the Administration Budget for an intra-budget transfer to cover bill amounts until the correct form is used.
Selectman D. Cowles **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0**

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Clarke, Cowles, DePietro, Marrion, Sadler
Nay	0
Abstain	0

Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to APPROVE** the transfer of $3,000 from Elections Office Operations to Other Contracts for programming the cost of new voting tabulators. Selectman B. Aaronson **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0**

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Clarke, Cowles, DePietro, Marrion, Sadler
Nay	0
Abstain	0

Interim Finance Director Stephanie Smigala left the meeting at 5:14 PM.

4.0 Consider and Act on Award Bid for Design Professionals for BCS School Roof:
Selectman T. Sadler **MOVED to AWARD** Silver Petrucelli and Associates in the amount of $61,500 for the design of the BCS School Roof. Selectman B. Aaronson **SECONDED;**

Discussions:

- BOS Selectman observed and inquired why there was a wide range of bid prices for design services.
- Town Administrator J. Rupert explained that the selected firm was the Temporary Building Committee's first choice based on qualifications and interviews conducted before bids were opened.
- The request for proposals defined the scope, timeline, and deliverables. Of five (5) firms interviewed, three (3) were qualified for bid review; the other two (2) were not opened because of concerns including limited familiarity with Connecticut's state-grant process.
- One opened bid was $650,000, calculated as a percentage of an estimated $10 million project cost.
- The BOS also cited a comparable school-roof design contract awarded for about $58,000.

MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Clarke, Cowles, DePietro, Marrion, Sadler
Nay	0
Abstain	0

5.0 Consider and Act on School Activity Fund:
Selectman T. Sadler **MOVED to APPROVE** the School Activity Fund. Selectman M. Clarke **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0**

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Clarke, Cowles, DePietro, Marrion, Sadler
Nay	0
Abstain	0

6.0 Consider and Act on Bids for Town Administrator Search:
Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to TABLE** the bid review for the Town Administrator search until Wednesday, November 4, 2026. Selectman R. DePietro **SECONDED;**

Discussions:
The bids had not yet been reviewed or vetted.

MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Clarke, Cowles, DePietro, Marrion, Sadler
Nay	0
Abstain	0

7.0 Executive Session: Responding to Constituent Feedback and Questions

Selectwoman G. Marrion **MOVED to ADD** the discussion regarding constituent feedback from executive session to the public agenda. Selectman D. Cowles **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Clarke, Cowles, DePietro, Marrion, Sadler
Nay	0
Abstain	0

Selectman Mather Clarke left the meeting at 5:48 PM.
Superintendent David Caruso left the meeting at 5:50 PM.

Public Discussion by BOS regarding Constituent Feedback and Questions:

- **Draft Response Level of Detail**
    - Some BOS stated the draft was overly detailed, while others said the detailed response was appropriate given the number and specificity of the constituent's questions.

- **Interim Finance Director Hiring Process and Job Description Advertisement**
    - The discussion covered requests to advertise the finance director's vacancy, the short notice of the departure, and concerns from constituents about how the interim appointment might appear.
    - A proposed re-write a combined wording would state that she was initially hired part-time as an administrative assistant to support the budget process, and that, based on demonstrated skill, professionalism, and organizational alignment, the town administrator recommended appointing her interim finance director; the Board accepted the recommendation.
    - The BOS noted that earlier discussions had considered an assistant finance director position as a way to support continuity.

- **Tax-Collection Calculation**
    - The BOS debated whether the issue should be described as a formula error or as incorrect application of a formula. The discussion focused on a factor of 0.98 being multiplied where it should have been divided, producing a lower amount. Members also discussed that the underlying calculation process had not previously been clearly documented and that additional review controls and a calculation tool had since been put in place.

- **Prior Decision-Making Responsibilities**
    - The BOS questioned the draft statement response attributing decisions to the Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen. They reviewed meeting records and agreed that the response should not claim that either body formally decided to absorb the shortfall if the record did not support that claim. The draft was to say that, when the issue was discussed at the June 18, 2026, meeting, the Finance Committee decided not to change the vote.

- **How the Shortfall will be Addressed and Managed**
    - The BOS agreed that specific reductions or delays could not yet be identified and should be determined later, based on budget projections. They discussed cost controls such as freezing departmental budgets and reducing unnecessary spending. The BOS noted that the effect on future budgets would depend on whether costs were reduced or whether surplus funds were spent, and that insufficient controls could affect future budgets and potentially the mill rate.

- **Staff Process to Constituent Feedback and Response Requests**
    - The BOS recommended placing future constituent correspondence on the agenda promptly, acknowledging receipt, and then developing a response.
    - The BOS noted that this response had taken several months and expressed appreciation for the constituent's questions and for the work involved in checking the facts.
    - The BOS agreed that staff should make the discussed edits and send the response by email on behalf of the Board of Selectmen.

8.0 Adjourn:
Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to ADJOURN** the meeting **at 6:01 PM.** Selectman B. Aaronson **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.**

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Cowles, DePietro, Marrion, Sadler
Nay	0
Abstain	0

Respectfully submitted by Andrea Vassallo, Recording Clerk
Andrea Vassallo
Please see minutes of subsequent meetings for corrections to these minutes and any corrections hereto.

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